

CHAPTER 32 MEDIATION OF DISPUTES

650—32.1(153) Definitions.

“*Board*” means the Iowa board of dental examiners.

“*Center*” or “*mediation center*” means an approved dispute resolution center that has applied for and received approval from the executive director of the prosecuting attorneys training coordination council provided for in Iowa Code section 679.3.

“*Mediation*” means an informal dispute resolution process by which the parties involved in a dispute voluntarily agree to enter into informal discussion and negotiation with the assistance of a mediator.

650—32.2(153) Mediation authorized. The board has the authority to provide for mediation of disputes between licensees and their patients when requested by either party or recommended by the board and agreed to by the parties.

32.2(1) The board may recommend for mediation those cases that are appropriate, which could include, but are not limited to, cases involving fee disputes.

32.2(2) The board’s referral of a matter to mediation shall not preclude the board from taking disciplinary action against the affected licensee. There is no obligation that the licensee participate in mediation and the licensee shall not be subject to disciplinary action for failure to participate in a board recommended mediation.

650—32.3(153) Mediation process.

32.3(1) Subsequent to an investigation by the board, the board may recommend mediation to address a dispute between a licensee and a patient.

32.3(2) If mediation is recommended by the board, the board shall notify the licensee, the patient and a mediation center of the recommendation within 30 days.

32.3(3) Upon receipt of a mediation request from the board, the mediation center shall provide the parties with a written statement setting forth the center’s established procedures and the cost, if any, prior to each mediation session.

32.3(4) If mediation is agreed upon by the parties involved, the mediation center shall schedule a mediation at a time and place convenient and neutral to the parties and the mediator.

650—32.4(153) Assignment of mediator. The assignment of a mediator shall be made by the mediation center. At the request of either party, and upon a showing of good cause, the director of the mediation center shall review the assignment of the mediator and shall, upon a showing of good cause, remove a mediator and assign another mediator to the case. Good cause includes partiality, bias, or the existence of a personal or professional relationship with any of the parties.

650—32.5(153) Cancellation. If mediation is scheduled, either party may contact the mediation center to cancel the mediation meeting or reschedule the mediation meeting.

650—32.6(153) Mediation meetings. In addition to any duties imposed by statute or rule, each mediator shall:

32.6(1) Clarify the names of all participating parties present and facilitate agreement on the attendance of assisting parties at the mediation meeting, as well as the extent to which such persons may participate in the proceedings.

32.6(2) Ensure that the parties understand that the mediator does not legally represent any of the parties and is neutral in the proceedings.

32.6(3) Help the parties review any proposed solution to determine if it can be effectively implemented and to help the parties understand the consequences of the proposed solution.

650—32.7(153) Mediation report. The mediation center shall report to the board whether or not the parties agreed to participate in mediation and whether or not the mediation was successful. The mediation center shall not, however, disclose the terms of the mediation to the board. The mediation center shall make such report within 15 days of the conclusion of the mediation.

650—32.8(679) Mediation agreement. If the parties involved in the dispute reach agreement, the agreement may be reduced to writing setting forth the settlement of the issues and the future responsibilities of each party.

650—32.9(679) Mediation confidential. All verbal or written information relating to the subject matter of mediation or a mediation agreement transmitted between any party to a dispute and a mediator or the staff of an approved center or any other person present during any stage of mediation, whether reflected in notes, memoranda, or other work products in the case files, is confidential communications except as otherwise expressly provided for in Iowa Code chapter 679. Mediators and center staff members shall not be examined in any judicial or administrative proceeding regarding confidential communications and are not subject to judicial or administrative process requiring the disclosures of confidential communications. This rule does not apply when a mediator or center staff member has reason to believe that a party to a dispute has given perjured evidence.

650—32.10(679) Mediator immunity. No mediator, employee or agent of a center, or member of a center's board may be held liable for civil damages for any statement or decision made in the process of mediation unless the mediator, employee, agent or member acted in bad faith, with malicious purpose or in a manner exhibiting willful and wanton disregard of human rights, safety or property.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 153.33 and Iowa Code chapter 679.

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